



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 30, 2008

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: California Department Of Forestry And Fire Protection Urban Forestry Grant

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Increase revenues and appropriations by \$42,000 in the Parks and Recreation Department Fiscal Year 2009 Miscellaneous Grants Fund for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Urban Forestry Grant; and
- B. Transfer \$6,962 from the Parks and Recreation Department Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget to the Parks and Recreation Department's Fiscal Year 2009 Miscellaneous Grants Fund.

DISCUSSION:

Background

In March 2008, the City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the Parks and Recreation Department to submit a grant proposal to CAL FIRE under the Urban Forestry Program. The Urban Forestry Program is funded under Proposition 84, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River Protection, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. The Department was awarded grant funds in the amount of \$42,000 for implementation of an urban forestry inventory project.

Project Description

The Urban Forest Tree Inventory Project includes 3 distinct elements: 1) an on-the-ground inventory of all existing 37,000 City street trees and vacant street tree sites and all trees located in 30 developed parks, 10 public facilities, and 112 street medians; 2) a focused inventory of 10 percent of the Street Tree Inventory using a street tree population assessment tool, and 3) development of outreach and education materials that include 4 self-guided tree tour maps, a community guide to tree species, and expansion of the City's website to include these educational materials as well as key features of the Urban Forest Inventory.

The primary objectives of the project are to 1) provide accurate up-to-date tree information for the development of a comprehensive urban forest management plan; 2) assist with protecting and enhancing Santa Barbara's horticultural heritage and the City's commitment to community forestry; 3) provide baseline information for an assessment of the value of the City's urban forest for energy conservation, water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, and property values; and, 4) foster community understanding of the horticultural, environmental and economic benefits of the urban forest.

The four self-guided tree tour maps will focus on parks with the greatest horticultural value. The community guide to tree species will illustrate existing City trees that provide significant horticultural and environmental value, provide guidance on the selection of tree species in home and commercial environments, and outline appropriate planting and maintenance techniques.

The on-the ground inventory was completed in Fiscal Year 2008. CAL FIRE grant funds will be used to complete a more detailed assessment of 10 percent of the Street Tree Inventory and the development of the education and outreach materials.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The total cost of the project is \$117,272. The Parks and Recreation Department is providing \$75,272 in matching funds . This includes \$68,310 already expended in Fiscal Year 2008 for the baseline Street Tree Inventory Project. An additional \$6,962 will be used to match grant funds expended on graphic design and printing services for the community tree guide and tree tour maps.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Tree inventories are an essential tool of good management by gathering accurate information on the health and diversity of the urban forest. This project will provide baseline information to assess the value of the City's urban forest for energy conservation, water quality, air quality, and wildlife habitat.

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APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office